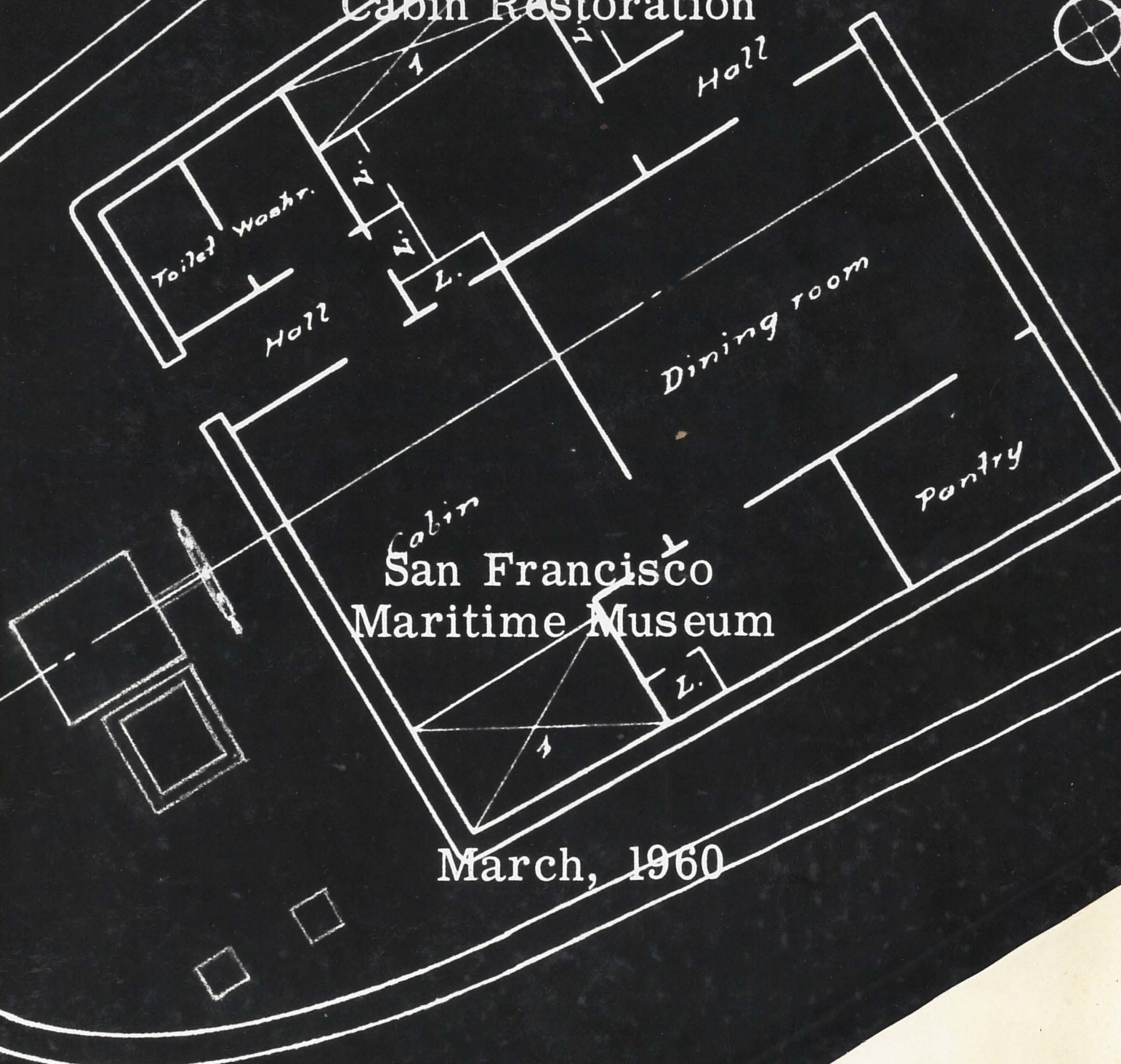


Schooner C. A. THAYER

Cabin Restoration



San Francisco
Maritime Museum

March, 1960

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Memorandum: C. A. THAYER -- CABIN RESTORATION

To: Mr. Jess T. Chaffee
Superintendent, District #4
Division of Beaches & Parks

From: San Francisco Maritime Museum

March 8, 1960

CABIN RESTORATION

Layout
Plan of Cabin
Finish
Furnishings
Stateroom Restoration

PLANS

METHA NELSON Accomodations
C. A. THAYER Cabin as Restored
GALILEE Berth Elevation

PHOTOGRAPHS

BLAKELY: Captain's Cabin
BLAKELY: Captain's Bedroom
JANE L. STANFORD: Cabin
COMET: Cabin
SAMAR and AURORA: Saloons
LYNTON: Cabin
JAMES DRUMMOND: Cabin
ARYAN: Cabin

APPENDIX

C. A. THAYER : CABIN RESTORATION

At the end of February, 1960, the restoration of the C. A. THAYER's cabin is so far completed that finishing and furnishing loom as the most pressing problems. The moving of bulkheads, relocation or replacement of mouldings and other fancy work, rehangng or replacement of doors, and removal of sixty years accumulation of paint has been completed. The work now moves into that final phase which will determine the character of the cabin--probably the most attractive and intimate part of the ship--as a display.

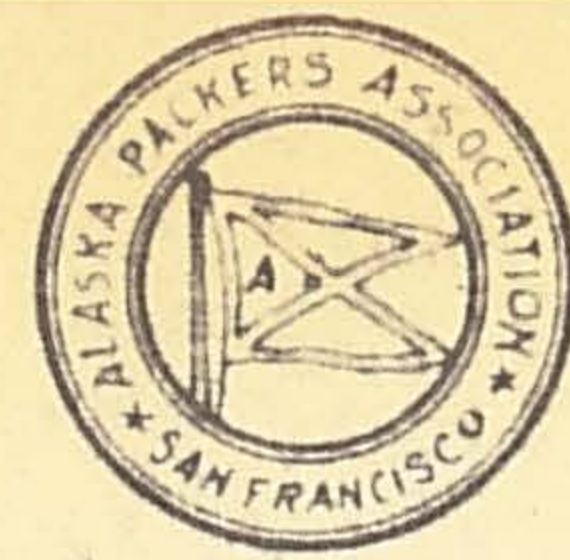
Layout

The arrangement of the cabin spaces has been completed along the lines proposed by us last summer and described in some detail in our memorandum of October 20, 1959, (which is appended to this report). The layout which we developed was based largely upon the recollections of Captain Ole Lee, a former master of the C. A. THAYER, and physical evidence uncovered by careful examination of the structure.

One significant departure from what we determined to be the original arrangement was incorporated into the proposed plan: this was the extension of the hall through what had been a portion of the mate's cabin, providing a "through" passageway between the forward and after entrances to the cabin. The exigencies of display and public circulation necessitated this change from the original layout, as is explained in some detail on pp. iii - v of the Appendix.

We recently uncovered a tracing, which is reproduced on the following page, of the cabin and deckhouse arrangements of the schooner METHA NELSON, a "sister ship" to the C. A. THAYER. This plan was made when the METHA NELSON was purchased by the Alaska Packers Association, in March of 1911, and almost certainly shows her original accommodations. It is extremely likely that this plan also represents the THAYER's original arrangement: all of the evidence which we have gathered points toward this conclusion.

The METHA NELSON plan not only confirms the validity of the cabin reconstruction, but also offers a solution to the problem of the bunk arrangement in the deckhouse "forecastle." When funds are available at some future date to restore the deckhouse to its original dimensions, this plan will again prove valuable.



Schr. Metha Nelson

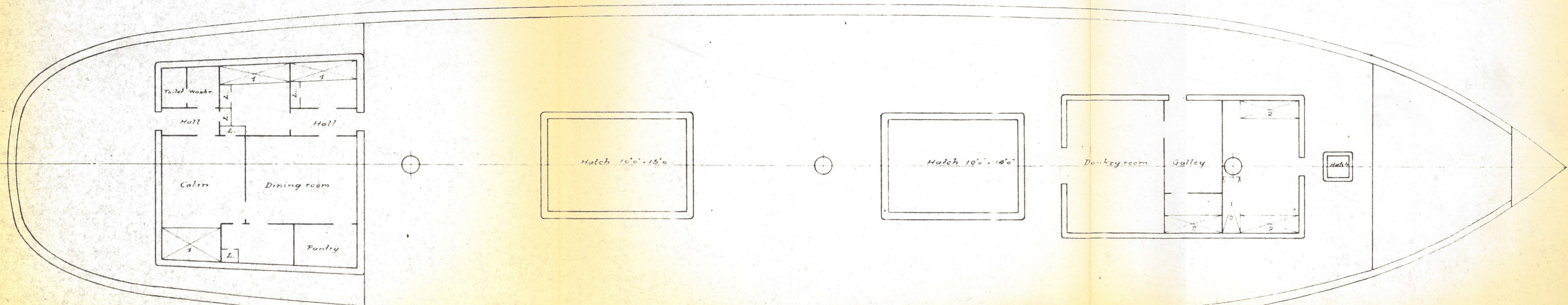
Scale 1/8" = 1' March 1911

METHA NELSON

BUILDER	YEAR	GROSS TONS	NET TONS	LENGTH	BREADTH	DEPTH
BENDIXSEN	1896	460	399	156	36	11.9
C.A. THAYER	BENDIXSEN	1895	453	156	36	11.8

REPRODUCED BY SAN FRANCISCO MARITIME MUSEUM

FEBRUARY, 1960



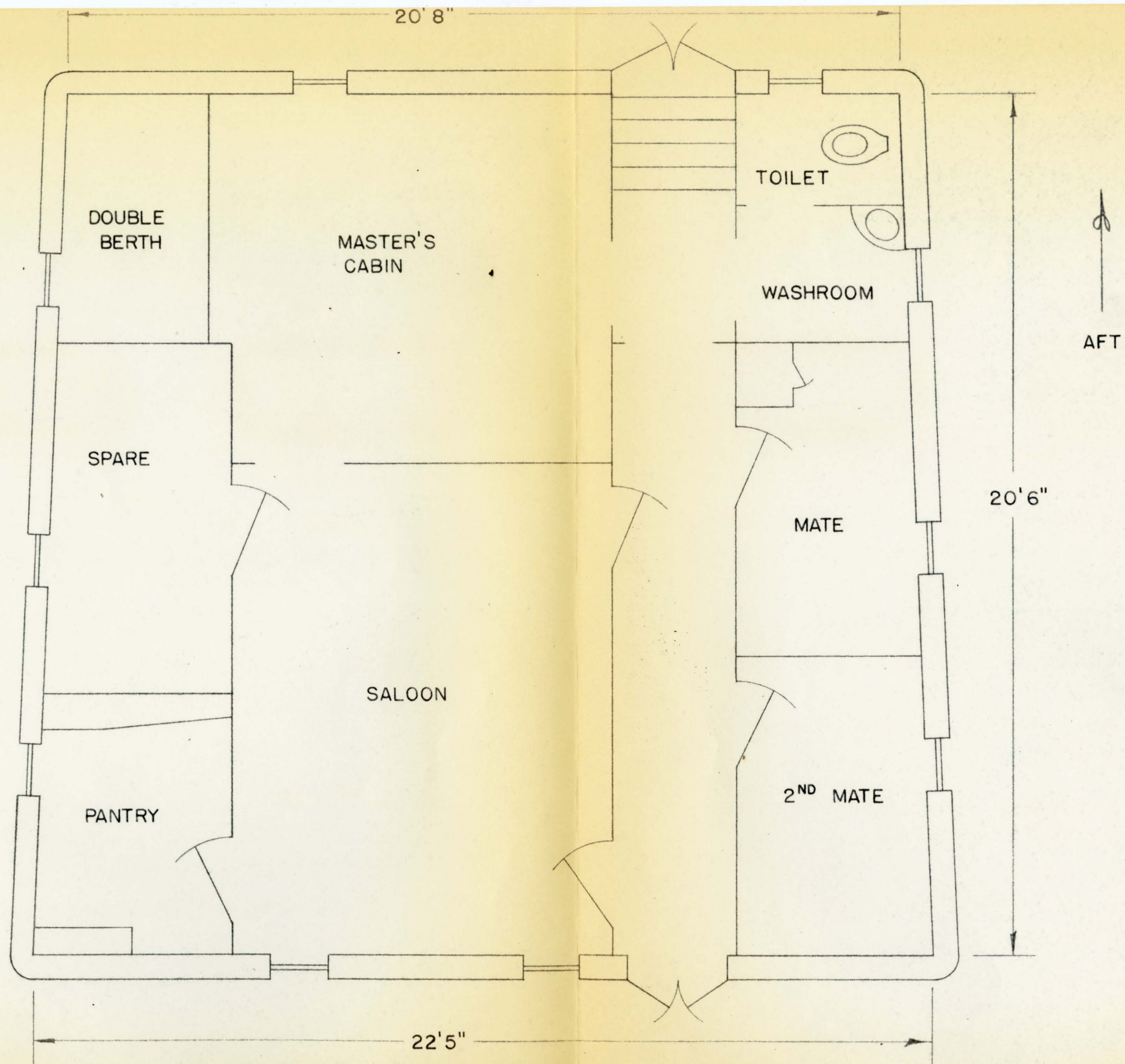
Plan of C. A. THAYER's Cabin

The plan on the following page shows the C. A. THAYER's cabin as restored at this date.

The public will circulate through the hall and saloon, while the pantry and captain's cabin will be the major "displays".

As a result, the saloon will be quite bare, with only the basic table, benches, stove, and hanging lamp; tableware and related accessories can be effectively displayed in the pantry, out of reach of souvenir hunters.

The whole of the master's cabin, which should be elaborately and completely furnished, will be visible through the doorways to the saloon and to the hall.



CABIN ARRANGEMENT
SCHOONER C.A. THAYER

SAN FRANCISCO MARITIME MUSEUM			
THAYER CABIN			
SCALE: $\frac{3}{8}$ " = 1 FT	DRN: B. KNAUTH		
DATE: MARCH 4, 1960	TRCD: S. JAXON		

Finish

Although plain white was the most common interior finish in West Coast schooner cabins, redwood paneling was sometimes given a "natural" finish, and in rare cases hardwoods and hardwood-veneers appeared. Since a natural hardwood interior was most highly esteemed in ship's cabins, logic alone would lead us to the conclusion that a "grained" finish on softwood would have been reasonably frequent. We have not, however, found any evidence of the use of this process--except in the C. A. THAYER herself.

In the saloon and master's cabin the bottom-most finish, lying underneath numerous layers of white, green, and blue paint, is light oak graining. There is no evidence that this succeeded a natural redwood finish, and there is only a bare possibility that it was applied over an original white finish. The graining appears only on the vertical surfaces, and the overhead was apparently white.

It would appear desirable to restore this finish, for not only is it most probably the original, but the graining will foster a less antiseptic atmosphere than the ubiquitous white and will be easier to keep clean.

We have had one of the few remaining graining experts inspect the cabin and show us samples of his work; he has estimated the cost of applying the oak graining (over a base coat applied by the owner) to the vertical surfaces in the saloon and captain's cabin at \$230. We recommend that means be found to employ the services of Peter Licin, 2680 McAllister St., San Francisco, to accomplish this work.

The base coat for the graining is a coat of flat white and semi-gloss white, mixed approximately half-and-half, and toned to a shade approximating that of the finish desired; this applied over a coat of white primer. After the surface is grained, it is varnished.

The graining in the C. A. THAYER's cabin appears to have been slightly darker than the chip below identified as "Light Oak", though not so brown as the "Dark Oak" sample. The original graining was a rather unattractive shade, unskillfully applied: here, as in restoring other details of the vessel, it is probably necessary to check impulses toward an expression of good taste.



Light Oak



Dark Oak

The finish of the remainder of the cabin, and of the overhead in the captain's cabin and saloon, should be semi-gloss white. Mr. Dring has tried some sample patches of this paint, which should be easy to maintain and which avoids the excessive gloss and "freshness" of the modern enamels.

Furnishings

The photographs accompanying this report illustrate the wide variety of furniture and other artifacts that are appropriate to the C. A. THAYER, and we invite attention to these rather than to some inventory of what "should" be in the cabin.

We do not place great confidence in details we have thus far gathered from former occupants of the THAYER's cabin, beyond accepting the general agreement that there was some kind of desk and sofa in the captain's room and a table and stove in the saloon. And, of course, even a quite accurate inventory of furnishings would tell us comparatively little about the precise appearance of each item.

We are continuing to accumulate recollections of the THAYER's furniture during her lumber-schooner days, but there is little doubt that in the last analysis the cabin must be representative of West Coast lumber schooners to a greater extent than it is a duplicate of the C. A. THAYER's own cabin in, say, 1900.

Our comments on the photographs express our views on the detailed furnishing of the cabin. But in general, we may say that the level of taste reflected in the furnishings should be mediocre with occasional garish touches: the West Coast lumber schooner captain stood much closer in "class" outlook to the saloon-keeper or grocer than to the "professional" man.

Schooner BLAKELY

The four-masted schooner BLAKELY was built by Hall Brothers in 1902. In such large vessels the captain had a sitting-room (shown here) and one or more separate bedrooms.

Of particular interest in the THAYER restoration is the Oriental rug and the fancy hanging lamp--and the patent rocking-chair with the silk cushion.



BLAKELY: Captain's Bedroom

Again, wall-to-wall Oriental carpeting appears. Note the piece of plainer carpet near the door, which must have served as a door-mat.

The birdcage would add a "live" touch to the THAYER's cabin. The THAYER has a built-in berth and should probably have a bureau-desk rather than the high-boy seen here.



A Bendixsen Barkentine

The captain's cabin of the barkentine JANE L. STANFORD shows moulding details identical to the C. A. THAYER. The STANFORD was built by Hans Bendixsen, the THAYER's builder, in 1892, and this photograph is filled with appropriate items for the THAYER's cabin.

The desk with the one-piece roll-top and pull-out writing table fits a description of the THAYER's desk which we have received from the daughter of Captain "Gus" Peterson.

Among the books are a four-volume set of The Great Republic by the Master Historians, The People's Common Sense Medical Advisor, Joseph Conrad's Under Western Eyes, The International Code of Signals, Azimuths of the Sun, and a 1918 American Practical Navigator.

The date of the photograph is further established by the patriotic photograph of Woodrow Wilson in the corner of the schooner-picture. A package of "10 Cigarettes 10" lies in an ash tray, and a package of tobacco atop the books.

The lamp on the table would seem a dangerous type to take to sea; the hanging lamp is a minor variation of a standard pattern.



"At Home" in the COMET

Captain Otto Lembke and his wife Hulda pose in their cabin aboard the three-masted schooner COMET at Santa Barbara in 1905.

The COMET, a schooner similar to the C. A. THAYER, was built by Hall Brothers in 1886, and her master's cabin appears to be of about the same size as the THAYER's.

This photograph conveys very well the feeling of "family life aboard," and the sofa, cushions, gramophone, mirror, bulkhead lamp, bunk curtains, and rocker are all appropriate to the C. A. THAYER's cabin.



an arched doorway to a brightly
lit room
1903

Two Dining Saloons

Above is the saloon of the four-masted schooner SAMAR, built by Hay & Wright at Alameda in 1901.

Below, the afterguard breakfasts aboard the big four-masted AURORA, built by the Everett Shipbuilding Company in 1901.

In the case of the SAMAR, the elaborate hardwood paneling (just possibly graining) and the water-coller in the corner are noteworthy.

The hanging lamps in both are similar, and are like that seen in the JANE L. STANFORD.

The table in the AURORA is quite small, and the men appear to be seated on benches. A comparatively small table, together with benches that could be pushed partly underneath, would facilitate the movement of the public in the C. A. THAYER's saloon.



The Feminine Touch

The Captain's cabin of the fine British four-masted bark LYNTON, built in 1894, reflects the delicate taste of the master's wife.

This elaborate and handsome cabin is quite out of the C. A. THAYER's class, but it well illustrates the standard which would provoke the envy, and probably inept emulation, of a West Coast skipper's wife.



Femininity Unleashed

The cabin furniture of the Downeaster JAMES DRUMMOND adds a new dimension to the expression "Yankee hell-ship".

Although this effect is a bit too rich for such as the THAYER, it does show that the captain was not necessarily master in his own quarters.



The Dickinson Family

Captain and Mrs. W. R. Dickinson and their daughter Bessie posed for this photograph when the ARYAN was in San Francisco.

It is hard to believe that the ARYAN was built by the same man who built the JAMES DRUMMOND, although the former is of the THAYER's vintage, while the latter was built in 1880.

The finish of the cabin shows the effectiveness of the white overhead in relieving dark wood-work.

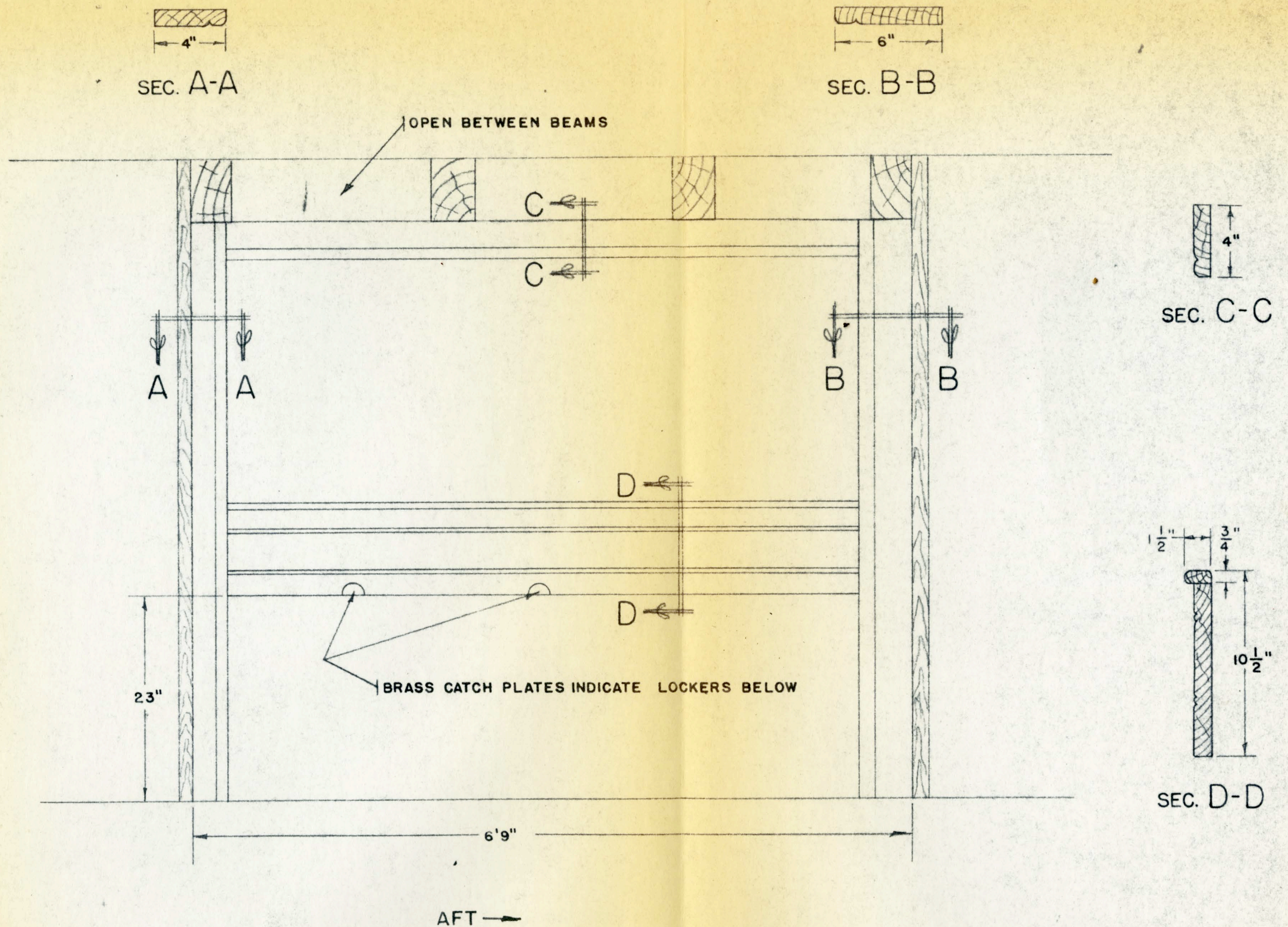


Stateroom Restoration

The first and second mates' rooms, on the port side, and the spare stateroom, to starboard, need not be restored at the present time in order for the cabin to be an entirely adequate display. However, one of the mates' cabins should certainly be fitted out at an early date. The bunk arrangement found in similar quarters in the GALILEE is most appropriate to these cabins, and is shown in the drawing on the following page.

The bunk should be high enough to provide crawl-space underneath to reach the extensive storage area underneath the poop deck outboard of the cabin-trunk. The plan arrangement should be as in the METHA NELSON, but with some kind of locker at one end of the berth.

Harry Nelson, a former mate of the THAYER, recalls that the first mate also had a small desk which lifted flush against the wall. This, with a stool or small chair, would complete the basic furnishings of one of these cabins.



SAN FRANCISCO MARITIME MUSEUM	
BUNK - SCHOONER GALILEE	
SCALE: 1" = 1 FT	DRN: B. KNAUTH
DATE: 24 FEB 1960	TRCD: S. JAXON
SCALE ON SECTIONS: 2" = 1 FT	

APPENDIX: RESTORATION OF
THE C. A. THAYER'S CABIN

General Layout
Captain's Cabin
The Problem of Authenticity
Saloon
Pantry and Bathroom
Doors
Finishing
Plans
Exterior
Work in Progress
Summary of Work Accomplished

20 Oct., 1959

RESTORATION OF THE C. A. THAYER'S CABIN

The progress of the restoration work in the cabin of the C. A. THAYER has been most gratifying, and it has reached a point where it is possible to visualize the effectiveness of this area as a display when the vessel is opened to the public. The first stage of the work may now be considered completed: the final shape of the cabin is clear, and Mr. Monahan, the accomplished joiner responsible for the majority of the excellent work which has been done during the past few months, has terminated his employment for the remainder of the year. He plans to return to the job after the first of the year, and the project should be substantially completed by spring.

Mr. Dring, Supervisor of the Project, has described the general pace of the work in his weekly reports; decisions as to precisely what changes to make, what restoration to attempt, have been made very much on a day-to-day basis by Mr. Dring, acting under advice from Maritime Museum representatives; at this time it would seem appropriate to take stock of what has been done, the reasons for doing it, and what steps are contemplated in completing this phase of the THAYER's restoration.

General Layout of the Cabin

The best description of the cabin which we have so far obtained was that given by Ole Lee, former chief mate and later master of the C. A. THAYER, in 1957. It is unfortunate that Captain Lee has since

died, for he could certainly fill in many details of the layout were he able to go aboard the vessel now. Captain Lee commented:

The following accommodations were in the cabin: On the port side, 3 rooms, first cook and steward, next 2nd mate and Chief mate next to him. The Chief mate's room was the largest as there was a hallway in front of the steward's and 2nd mate's rooms.

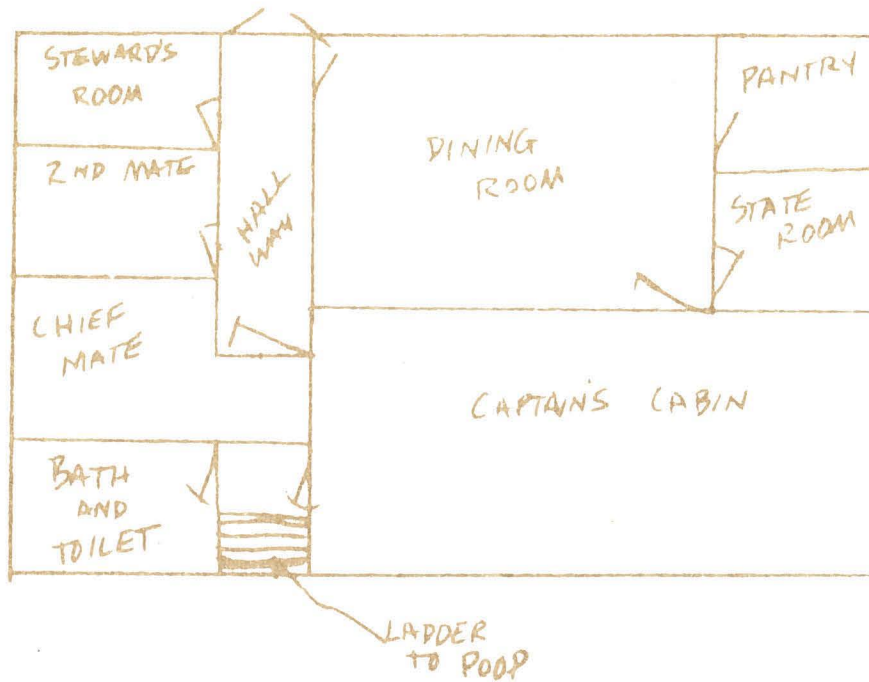
The only entrance from the main deck was on the port side of the cabin leading into the hallway; to the left coming into the hall was a door leading into the dining room. This was quite a large room with a table large enough to seat seven men, the chairs were screwed down to the deck. There was a stove for heating purposes.

On the starboard side forward was the pantry, next to a stateroom, with a door leading from the diningroom.

On the starboard side on the after bulkhead in the dining room was a door leading into the captain's cabin. The captain's cabin had a double bunk on the starboard side; there were lockers under the bunk, also a beautiful desk with lockers built over it and on each side. This I believe was built into the vessel when she was built. On the starboard side was a door leading into a small hall where there was a stairway up to the poop deck. Under the stairway was a small door into the lazarette.

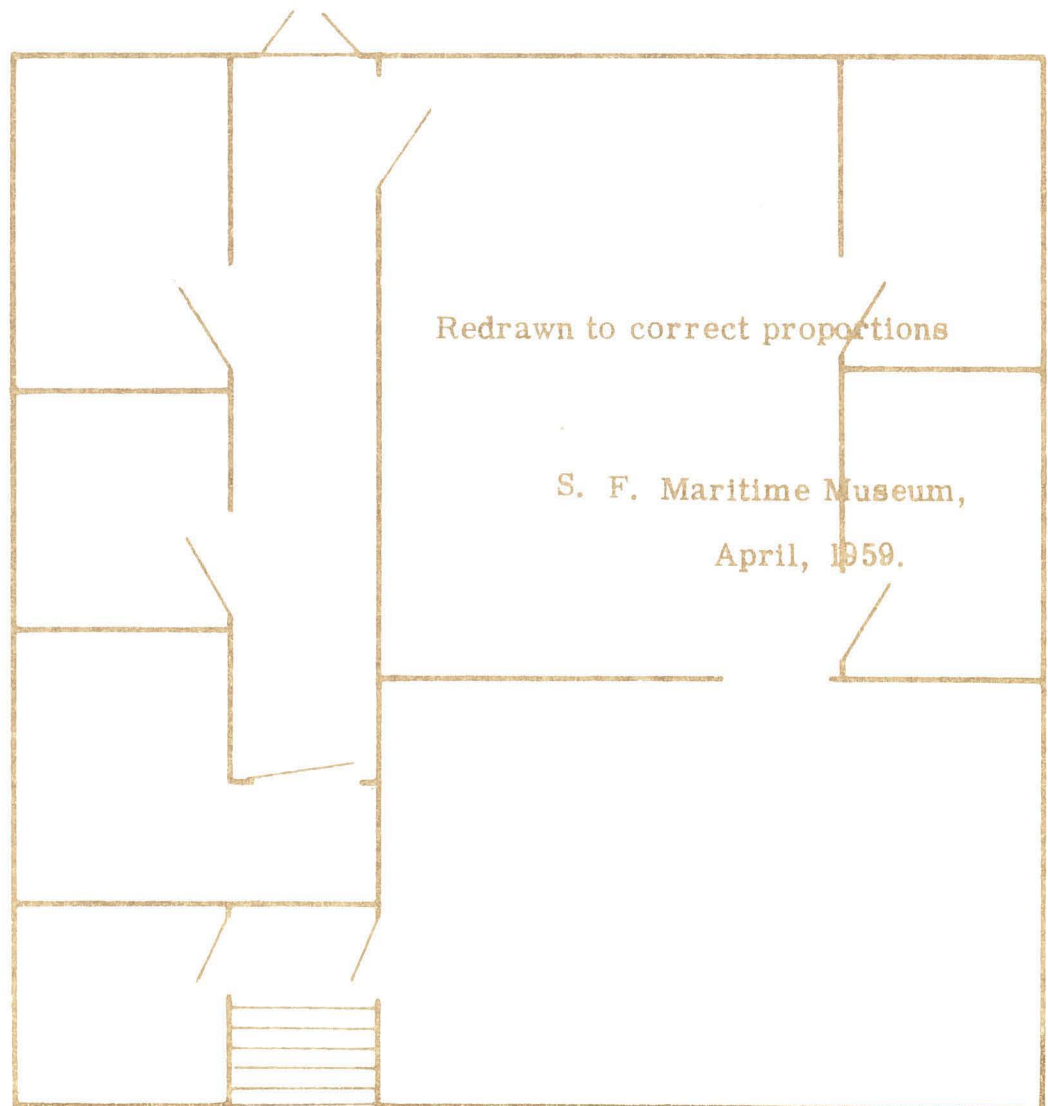
On the port side of the hall was a door leading into the toilet and bath. Here was a bath tub, toilet and wash basin with running water supplied by a small tank overhead which was filled from outside on top of the house. A big skylight supplied daylight for the captain's cabin and dining room.

[See drawings on following page]



C.A. THAYER

OLE LEE'S SKETCH OF MAIN CABIN,



Investigation of the condition of the cabin in April and May of this year revealed that there was no doubt as to the accuracy of Lee's sense of proportion in showing the captain's cabin as much larger than it was then -- the line of the original bulkhead, about two feet forward of the existing bulkhead, could be plainly seen. The line of the bulkhead on the port side of the passageway was also plainly visible.

Lee's recollection was also borne out when the reefer box was torn out, exposing evidences of dish racks in the pantry. However, his location of three cabins and the bathroom along the port side did not seem to work out.

Examination and measurements of the cabin of the AZALEA, a slightly smaller Bendixsen schooner, revealed that she had apparently had a similar arrangement, in which the mate's cabin shut off access to the poop from the cabin except through the skipper's stateroom.

At this point we slackened our efforts to determine the precise arrangement of the port side cabins, as it was clearly impractical from the standpoint of circulating the public through the cabin to consider an arrangement which permitted fore-and-aft travel only through the captain's cabin.

Captain's Cabin.

The captain's cabin is the one area in the ship which will relieve the rather stark utilitarian atmosphere of a coastwise lumber schooner. The THAYER's captains often carried their wives aboard, and the C. A. THAYER, in common with most of the other good-sized schooners, must have at times had a master's cabin crowded with the most elaborate appointments that the pocketbook of the skipper, the taste of his wife,

and the occasionally rude behavior of the sea, would allow.

In the words of Mrs. Peter Nelson:

"One time there was a storm. The cabin was different then. They have altered it. There was a sofa and a rocking chair, and a kind of bureau -- nice furniture. And they got loose, and come roaring in. An Rudolf says, 'Mama! Don't you cry! I'll dance the klip-klop for you . . .'"

Obviously, the public cannot be permitted to enter the refurbished captain's cabin -- or all the nice furniture will "get loose." In particular, there is no way in which all of the little articles which might be found in an inhabited cabin could be displayed adequately in our souvenir-conscious society.

The solution to this problem, submitted in the drawing we gave to Mr. Dring in July, was cut the passageway straight through from the forward end of the house to the poop. This proposal realized the following advantages:

- 1) It permits the captain's cabin to be screened from the public, yet affords views of the interior through two doorways.
- 2) Public circulation is about as good as could possibly be hoped for in a ship's cabin: there are two entrances to the saloon, and a straight-through passage to the poop.
- 3) The arrangement adheres very closely to the original.

The Problem of "Authenticity"

We are now investigating the furnishing of the cabin in detail, through the assembling of photographs of the cabin interiors of West Coast schooners of the period, and through interviews and correspondence with survivors of the era -- and of the C. A. THAYER in particular. A matter of display policy crops up here: Should an attempt be made to duplicate the exact arrangements found in the C. A. THAYER at some

particular moment in the past -- or should she be outfitted in a manner typical to the turn of the century, employing the most effective materials and arrangements which can be employed?

In our opinion, a representation of how the vessel might have appeared is the most desirable approach. Attempt at exact duplication must founder on the rocks of lack of adequately detailed information and the difficulty of obtaining the proper materials. The exigencies of public display have already brought us to a change in the original layout of the cabin -- other alterations will be necessary in the future, both in the THAYER and in the WAPAMA.

Naturally, every departure from the C. A. THAYER's peculiar authenticity must be scrutinized most carefully, working from the premise that something which was originally a part of the ship, particularly during her years as a lumber schooner, has inherent value for that reason alone. Yet in making changes which are desirable for really important considerations of public safety, public instruction, or overriding display value we may allow the severity of our historical judgment to be tempered by the reflection that no ship which is swarming with tourists can possibly be a 100% "real" lumber schooner, and that the THAYER herself has suffered so many changes during her long career that it would be a very difficult problem to even determine which C. A. THAYER we are trying to reproduce.

The answer to those problems involving a conflict between perfect historical accuracy and interests of convenience, safety, costs, and display impact would seem to lie in an appreciation of the difference between historical integrity and preoccupation with some unattainable ideal of literal reincarnation.

Saloon

It is not likely that it will prove desirable to restore all of the spaces in the cabin at present. The captain's cabin and saloon take the first priority, the bath and pantry second, and the three small cabins a poor third. It will most probably prove desirable to leave the three cabins closed off from the public for the present: they can be finished up one at a time in the more distant future.

The public should, of course, be permitted in the saloon. This is necessary to realizing the full display value of the master's cabin: a view through the saloon door as well as the passage door permits inspection of the entire cabin. The saloon will have little in the way of fixtures: a stove at the forward end; and a table in the center, with suitable seats.

The dining arrangement mentioned by Captain Lee, "A table large enough to seat seven men, the chairs . . . screwed down on the deck," might crowd the saloon too much for convenient display to the public. It also sounds a little large for a schooner which would carry no more than four or five in the "afterguard," and therefore may not have been the original installation. We hope to get some definitive information from Mrs. F. G. Scott, widow of one of the THAYER's earlier masters, on the arrangement of the saloon (and cabin) during the vessel's lumber schooner days, before arriving at a final recommendation.

Pantry and Bathroom

The pantry should make a very good display. The idea of a double ("Dutch") door arrangement, which would keep the public at bay while permitting the the visitor to lean right into the pantry seems a very good one. A little further research on the original layout would be in order,

however, before adopting this arrangement.

The bathroom will also be an interesting display, requiring little in the way of installation. A sink recessed into a top, extending the whole length of the washroom niche, (such as that which may be still seen in the BEULAH) will be good-looking and easy to install. We are presently trying to determine what sort of toilet should be placed in the after section of the bathroom (that part occupied by the shower until recently.).

Doors

The moving of bulkheads and restoration of the cabin has made most of the existing doors of questionable utility. The door to the bathroom is of an appropriate pattern for the passageway and should be left in place, hooked back against the bulkhead. The door to the forward port side cabin can be refitted, and matches the bathroom door; a new door of the same pattern will have to be made for the center port side cabin.

The outside face of the door at the forward end of the saloon should naturally be refaced to match the other doors in the passage. The after door to the saloon poses a problem. It cannot be hung so that it swings into the saloon, as the moulding prevents it from folding flush against the bulkhead; if it swings into the passage it will fold against the bulkheads, but in the narrow passageway the protruding door knob will prove a threat to the public's clothing. It would be best to proceed on the initial assumption that this door, as well as the two doors to the captain's cabin, are best left off.

Finishing

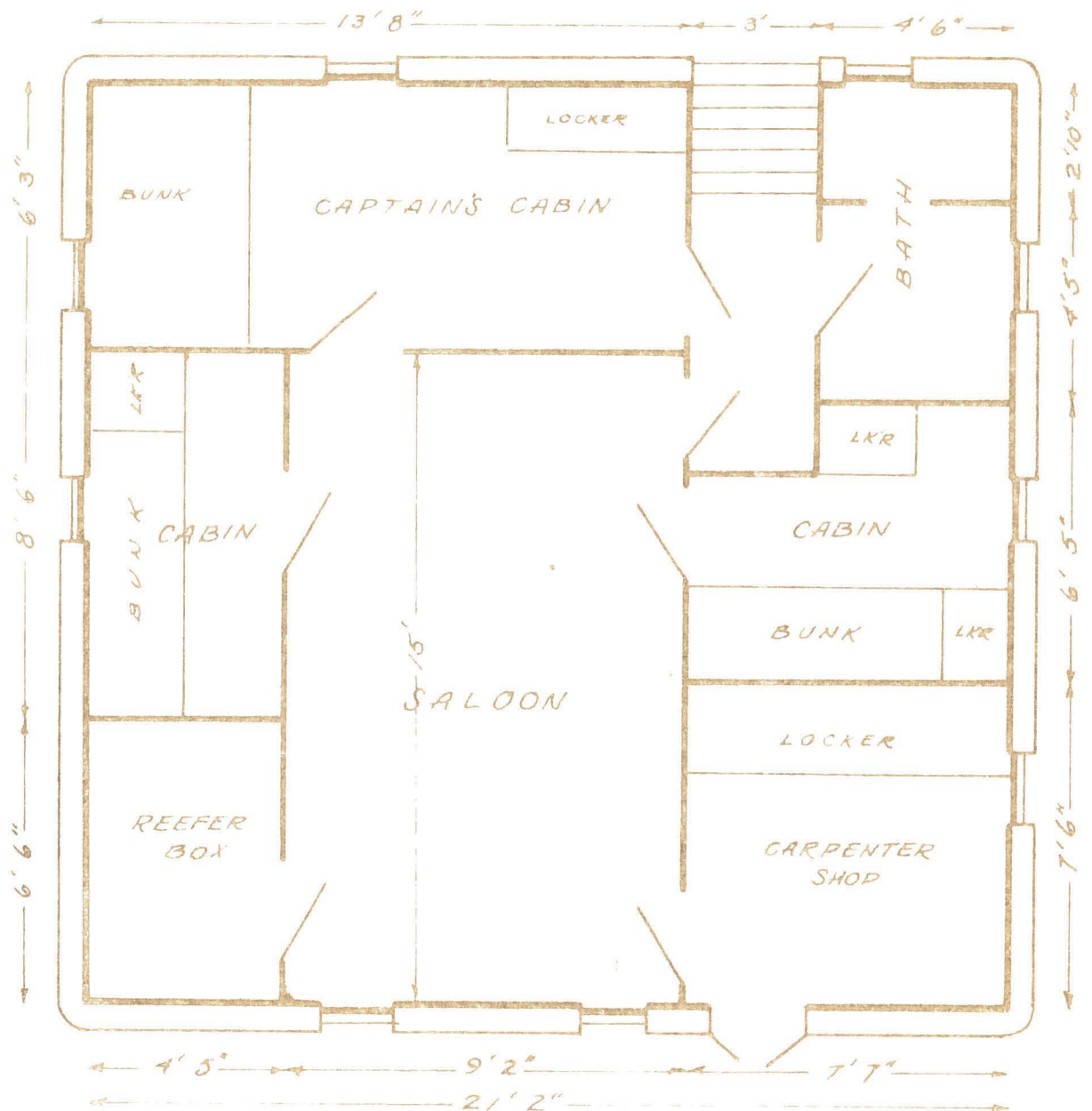
Underneath the layers of paint on the old panelling in the cabin there is evidence that the original finish was "grained." Later, the cabin was painted white, and it has apparently been that color during most of the schooner's career. The condition of the surfaces after mouldings have been replaced and the existing paint removed will probably determine the finish that is finally applied.

Originally, the cabin panelling, as well as the tongue and groove bulkheads, were all redwood, but fir has generally been employed as a replacement material. The advice of a real expert in this old-time technique will be sought as soon as the paint removal and joiner-work has proceeded to a point where the final condition of the interior may be determined. Cost may also prove an important factor by the time the job has progressed to the point where finishing is the primary concern.

At all events, white, with a little gold trim in the mouldings, is a traditional and attractive finish, and may be employed without fear of censure.

Plans

Following is a plan of the cabin as it appeared before restoration work commenced, together with the proposed layout submitted to Mr. Dring in July. The latter is here reproduced with minor changes worked out by Mr. Dring and Maritime Museum representatives since July.

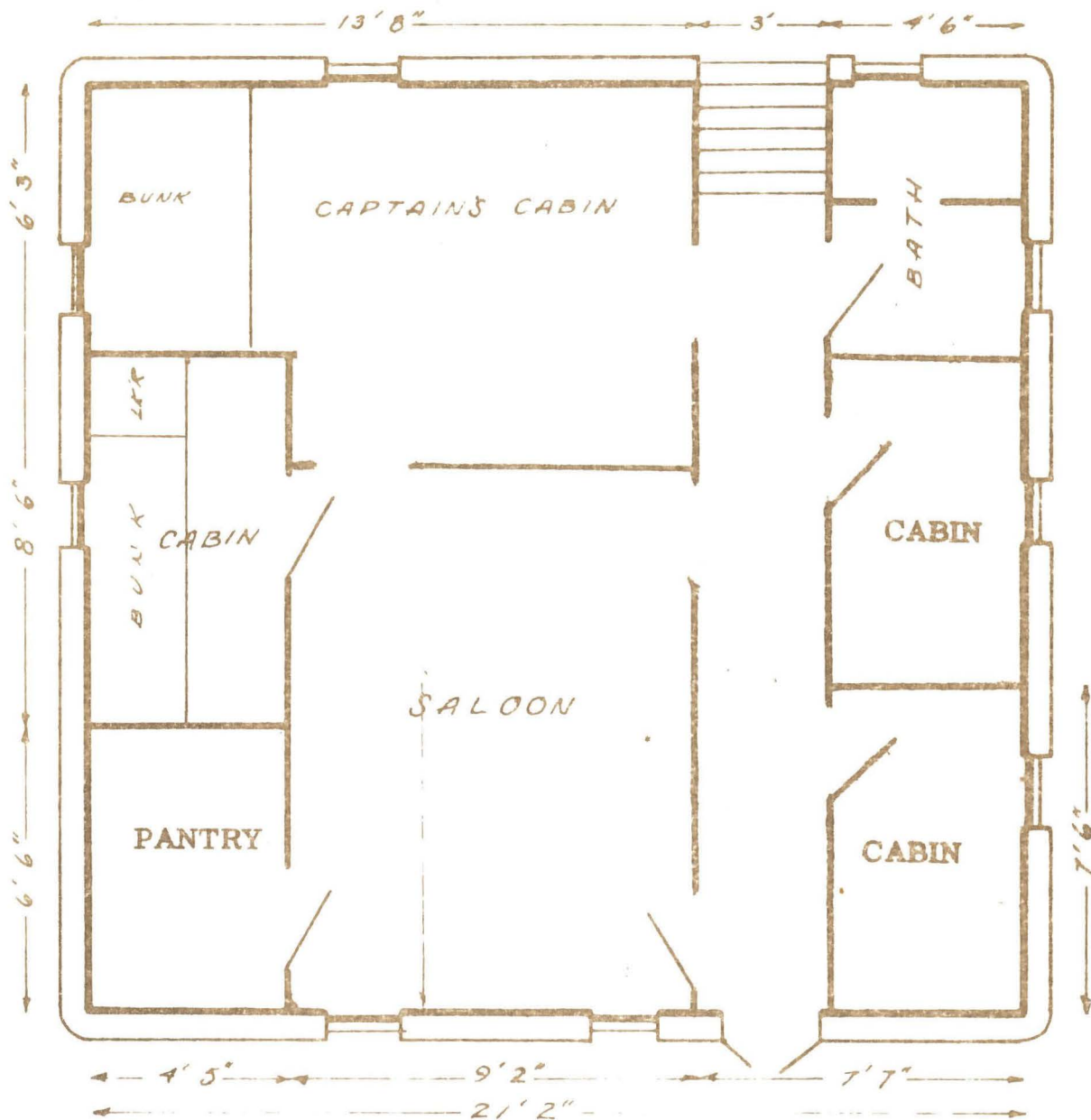


Sch. C. A. THAYER

PRESENT ARRANGEMENT OF MAIN CABIN

SCALE $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'$

APRIL 1959



Sch. C. A. THAYER

PROPOSED ARRANGEMENT OF MAIN CABIN

SCALE $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'$

JULY, 1959

Exterior

The decking comprising the starboard forward side of the cabin roof was found to be thoroughly rotten, and its removal and replacement was necessary in order to get a water-tight top to the house. The heavy beams and margin-piece, as well as the thick forward bulkhead of the cabin, were also found to be in an advanced state of deterioration, particularly in the way of the old reefer-box. Unfortunately, the deterioration was so extensive that entire removal of the rot was impractical, but the reconstruction may be considered a success and it will be many years before more thorough work need be attempted.

The major portion of the decking of the cabin top was found to be in good condition. Investigation of the treatment of the cabin top in the coastal lumber schooners revealed that a great many of these vessels had the seams payed with white compound, and that the decking was oiled. As this process would be the most attractive, it has been adopted, and when the poop area finally reaches display condition it should present an impressively "shipshape" appearance.

Work in Progress

The ultimate impact of the C. A. THAYER's cabin as a display will be the result of the cumulative effect of a mass of details: the excellent reconstruction effort will not "carry" the cabin by itself, and considerable remains to be done in planning 1) furnishings, 2) interpretive technique, and 3) lighting. In comparison with major rebuilding jobs this comparatively superficial work requires research and planning which often seems entirely out of proportion to the size of the task.

One does not have to look far about him to find essentially interesting and worthwhile exhibits which are "flat" (if not outright spoiled) because of inferior interpretation and inadequate attention to the details of presentation. In the last analysis, it is the garnishing which is apt to determine the character of the dish -- and we propose that Hollandaise is worth the effort, even though we can buy mayonnaise in jars.

Summary of work accomplished since May, 1959

Companionway doors rebuilt.

Hatch to hold decked over.

Bathroom bulkhead removed to original position.

Bulkhead to master's cabin removed to original location.

Tongue and groove bulkheads on both sides of passageway repaired,
renewed or installed.

Reefer box removed.

Mouldings, grille-vents, replaced where necessary.

Mouldings and panelling in saloon replaced to original position.

Paint removal well underway.

Forward part of roof decking on starboard side replaced; new
beams and margin piece scarfed in as necessary.

Cabin roof entirely recaulked.

Sliding port covers rebuilt.

107707



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